



## Table Talk

Encouraging communication while paying full attention to children helps create a positive view of themselves and the world they live in.

### Remove distractions

- Turn off the television
- Turn off the computer
- Take the phone off the hook or set answering machine to pick up phone calls.
- Put away unfinished projects and activities.
- Anything else that has your attention? Put it away until after dinner.

### Tips/Ideas

- Make a weekly/monthly calendar of activities/events going on (practice, grandparents caring for child while gone, games etc.)
- Make a space on calendar for issues to discuss, where children can write important things when they get home from school so they don't forget to tell parents. Discuss during dinner.
- Have a "magic" fork, spoon or other object. Person talking has the magic object and is the only one to be talking. Everyone pays full attention to this person. Pass the fork on after turn is complete.
- Postpone negative conversation (grades/behaviors) for another time away from the table.
- Switch up eating environments. Try a picnic in the house or outside. Different surroundings/observations may lead to different conversations.

## Questions for discussion

### Daily topics:

- What did you do today?
- Do you have homework?
- What projects are you working on? Do we need to do any of it at home?
- What friends are you hanging out with?
- What do you want to do this weekend? Do you want to have a friend over?
- Talk about what is going on in parents' life.
- Before meals, take turns saying what you are thankful for.